

BLACKSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT

News Release

DATE: September 12, 2005

CONTACT: Lt. B.E. Bradbery 961-1810

SUBJECT: Arrests made in Purse Theft Scheme

Blacksburg Police have arrested a 47-year-old woman in connection with a series of purse and wallet thefts.

Police arrested Debra Huffman Earles, of Givens Lane in Blacksburg this afternoon at 12:30. Earles was arrested at her home without incident. Earles is charged with four counts of larceny in relation to four different thefts throughout Town. All four of the warrants indicate that the charges are Class 6 Felonies because Earles was previously convicted of larceny. Under Virginia Law, after a person is convicted of two or more larcenies any subsequent offenses are Felonies. The thefts occurred during the day, over the past week, in parking lots at Blacksburg Middle School, Kipps Elementary School and two day care centers in south Blacksburg. Four separate victims were identified and each lost a purse or wallet. Numerous items, credit cards, check books, personal identification and an undisclosed amount of cash were taken. Police have not been able to recover any of the stolen goods and the investigation continues.

Earles is currently being held in the Montgomery County Jail without bond. Blacksburg Police are working with other law enforcement agencies in the New River Valley where Earles may have also operated.

Earles is scheduled to be arraigned tomorrow in a Montgomery County Court. No trial date has been set.